

# Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program *the Adirondack Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management*

Fall Joint Committee Meeting – DRAFT Notes  
Monday October 26, 2009  
9:30-2:30

*Participants: Mark Craig (DEC R6), Mark Malchoff (LCSG), Pat and Tom Willis (Rainbow Lake Association), Leslie Surprenant (OISC), Meg Modley (LCBP), Ed Snizek (APA), Dan Kelting (PSC), Caitlin Stewart (HCSWCD), Dan Spada (APA), Emily DeBolt (LGA), John Davis (Adirondack Council), Keith Rivers (DEC R6), Emily Selleck (Cornell Coop. Ext.), Ken Kirkham (National Grid), Ray Oram (DOT R2), Laura Smith (Willsboro resident), Dan Levy (DEC R5 Lands and Forests), Doug Fitzgerald (DEC R5 Operations), Wayne Blanchard (DEC Operations), Hilary Smith (APIPP), Tyler Smith (APIPP), Tom Colarusso (USDA), Lance Durfey (DEC R5 Wildlife), Carol Treadwell (ASRA)*

## **I. Introductions and Announcements**

Hilary welcomed members to the fall meeting of APIPP's aquatic and terrestrial committees. She made a special announcement regarding Mark Craig's retirement and thanked him for his years of service as one of APIPP's founding members. Hilary also noted that Steven Flint was on medical leave but he asked that she send his regards to partners in attendance.

## **II. PRISM Report (Slides 1–19)**

Please see attached pdf of Hilary's powerpoint that summarizes key annual activities to-date.

### **Aquatic Project (Slides 20-49)**

Please see attached pdf which includes Tyler's powerpoint detailing several key issues: variable leaf watermilfoil infestations; spiny water flea spread prevention measures; BASS questionnaire and AIS educational programming; lake manager spreadsheet; and, 90 Miler inspections.

### **Terrestrial Project**

Update provided by Wayne Blanchard and partners during Roundtable.

## **III. Partner Roundtable**

**Wayne Blanchard (DEC Operations Invasive Species Specialist).** This year was an exceptional year for invasives and plant growth. The plants were much bigger, making infestations seem worse. Wayne managed invasives at 32 campgrounds. 11 eradication areas are still clean. The size of infestations varied among sites between this year and last. In 2008 1,500 purple loosestrife plants were pulled, in 2009, 2,085 plants were removed. Wayne reported that generally there was a big garlic mustard increase this year due to the cool, wet weather – some plants reached 6ft in height! In 2008, however, Cranberry Lake Campground was a pilot site for using herbicide to treat garlic mustard in state campgrounds. This spring he saw significantly fewer 2 year old plants, which was mostly due to the spraying of first year plants by Steven Flint in fall 2008. He noted the importance of eradicating 2<sup>nd</sup> year garlic mustard plants before they go to seed.

Wayne reported that he also identified spoils areas that are utilized by campgrounds to dump brush and down woody material. These areas have become hotspots for invasive species and need to be annually monitored and managed. One species discovered was mugwort, a relatively new terrestrial invader in the park. Wayne worked in collaboration with Department of Corrections to excavate an infected spoils area and separate plant material and soil.

Dan Spada pointed out that Wayne is addressing new species that are not in the Inter-Agency Guidelines and suggested that he record information and lessons learned so that it can be entered into the guidelines and best

management practices.

One of the issues that Wayne identified is disposal of woody brush materials. New burn regulations will make it difficult to continue burning next year, despite an exemption for invasive species control. This will make management more labor intensive. Wayne also noted needing educational materials to hand out to interested staff and campers. He also expressed his concern about the spread of wild parsnip, particularly in Lake George, Indian Lake and Long Lake, because of its human health impacts.

Partners identified that the number of certified herbicide applicators is a limiting factor for successful treatments. DEC Operations Region 5 currently has one certified applicator and while he would not be able to treat sites regularly, he may be able to assist with priority spot treatments.

**Lance Durfey (DEC R5):** Lance reported that because two adult snakehead fish were caught again this spring, the DEC launched a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt to eradicate Northern snakehead in Orange County. They used Rotenone to treat Catland Creek and the prognosis is optimistic. They collected 28 Northern snakehead; the biggest was 8 inches and one was a gravid female. Leo Demong led the application effort but is retiring very soon. Mark Craig said that there is a regional managers meeting to discuss how the regions will deal with a constant decrease in qualified staff.

**Carol Treadwell (ASRA):** Carol circulated the biocontrol monitoring report for a project funded by the LCBP to release beetles at 4 sites to manage purple loosestrife along the shorelines of Mill and Power Ponds. The beetles established, but success varied depending on the site. Carol also worked with Steven, Meiyin Wu and two SUNY Plattsburgh interns to monitor wetlands along the Ausable River. They did find several invasives and characterized them in a report. Carol is trying to identify priorities for the Ausable River. Didymo is one of their top priorities. Meg said that VT implemented the first stewardship program at access points on the Mad River to prevent didymo from spreading to other waters.

**Meg Modley (LCBP):** Variable leaf milfoil was discovered in Lake Champlain late this summer, bringing the total number of aquatic invasives in the Lake to 49. Preliminary surveys have found dense, small patches. They will continue to monitor but there will be no rapid response on this species. Water chestnut management is going well; the range of the population is reduced every year but additional funds, particularly from NY, are needed to sustain the program. Vermont passed an AIS Transport Law making it illegal to transport AIS but a funding mechanism was not established. Funding may be added as an addendum to the law in the future. The LCBP AIS Rapid Response Management Plan was approved by the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. They are now working with lead agencies to organize a rapid response task force. The LCBP has been working with the Canal Corporation to conduct a feasibility study on an invasive species mitigation measure on the Champlain canal. The Army Corp. of Engineers will be taking the lead. Senator Pat Leahy secured \$100,000 for a feasibility study on a spiny waterflea mitigation measure on the Glens Falls Feeder Canal. Seven stewards were on Lake Champlain between Memorial Day to Columbus Day and they participated in many Quadra-centennial events as well as ball games, kids classes, sailing centers, and more to convey spread prevention messages.

**Emily DeBolt (LGA):** Emily included a summary of stats from this season's boat launch stewards: 3,886 boats were inspected and Eurasian watermilfoil, water chestnut, curly leaf pondweed and zebra mussels were the species most frequently removed. LGA partnered with the Lake George Land Conservancy to pull spotted knapweed at the Hudson River ice meadows. They are also involved in a project to manage phragmites at campgrounds. They had information tables and events during Invasive Species Awareness Week, participated in training and surveys for forest pests at state and private campgrounds, and led educational events during Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) awareness month in August. Emily also reported finding a lot of wild parsnip in the Lake George area and shares Wayne's concern about its spread. Several residents have also complained about yellow hawkweed in the area. There were several large triathlons in Lake George this summer, and

Emily developed a tip-strip about spread prevention for swimmers with wet suits. Larry Eichler discovered brittle naiad in Dunhams Bay and pulled all plants. Emily asked about whether there is concern about Southern naiad, which is in Lake George, Brant Lake, Rainbow Lake, and Chateaugay Lake. Southern naiad is listed as native to the US but not much is known about its distribution and behavior in local waters. Pat Willis reported that Southern naiad wasn't that bad in Rainbow Lake this year but it is one to watch. Emily is starting a Native Plant Nursery that carries plants native to the Adirondacks that can be used in landscaping.

**Dan Kelting (PSC AWD):** The Watershed Institute has been involved in aquatic invasive species activities for approximately 10 years, including spread prevention, monitoring, and management. Dan's main area of focus has been on management. They are currently managing Eurasian watermilfoil in 10 waterbodies using three 4-person dive teams. Dive teams typically have an 11 week season, June 1<sup>st</sup> – mid August and most of their work focuses on heavily infested waterbodies. The management goal is to bring the milfoil population down to a level that the lake association can handle. Approximately \$210,000 was expended in 2009 and involved 3,700 man hours removing 60 tons of milfoil (wet weight); 1/3 comes from State Eradication Grant funds (most of the waterbodies he works with are supported via this money), and 2/3 is from private funds. Dan reported several successes: 3 of the 10 lakes are at a local management level, while 7 others require additional resources. PSC conducted rapid response in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> lakes of the Fulton Chain for Eurasian watermilfoil. Variable leaf milfoil is well-established throughout the chain, specifically in bays and small inlets.

**Tom Colarusso (USDA):** USDA had a huge undertaking with emerald ash borer (EAB) trapping this year. Staff (including 10 temp staff), partners (Adirondack Council, APIPP and others), and volunteers deployed between 2,500 and 2,800 traps throughout the region. They did not find any additional EAB infestations this summer. There was also another trapping operation in the western section of the state that did not find any either, raising the question about how well the traps work. A student in Ottawa utilized a biomonitoring program to look for EAB involving a type of wasp that preferentially feeds on EAB type beetles. Tom stressed the importance of education and outreach, rather than surveillance, because often landowners are the first to notice an infestation. Tom has a DVD and brochures about EAB and ALB, so contact him if you're in need of those materials. His supply is dwindling but should be restocked in the coming months. Tom received about 20 false calls regarding ALB. Each specimen was the white-spotted pine sawyer. USDA considers EAB un-eradicatable but ALB eradicatable. All agreed that the purple EAB traps generated much public curiosity and awareness about the threat of forest pests. Tom asked partners to let him know if they see EAB traps so that he can take them down.

**Ray Oram (DOT R2):** DOT Region 2 performed more treatments this year than last. They located Japanese knotweed patches in the Blue Mountain Lake area and worked with land owners to receive permission to manage on private lands. They also surveyed and treated Route 30 for purple loosestrife and managed several small phragmites infestations. Wayne mentioned a large phrag patch near the Snowy Mtn trailhead that is ROW and can be easily managed by DOT. Ray wasn't aware of the infestation.

**Ed Snizek (APA):** The APA received a permit from Lake Luzerne for utilizing an aquatic herbicide to control an 11 acre area of Eurasian watermilfoil. They are proposing to use a 275 SQ FT sequestering curtain to contain the treatment.

**Leslie Surprenant (OISC):** The OISC has the go ahead to spend 3 of the 5 million dollars for invasive species from the Environmental Protection Fund. The challenging aspect is that they need to spend it by March 31<sup>st</sup>. They will be contracting with LIISMA and SLELO. The original host agency for the Catskill Partnership has declined so now the partnership must move towards the bid process. The last round of terrestrial grants will not be funded. There will not be another round in the near term. The OISC continues work on the 4-tier list and Dave Adams will present progress to date at the October NYS Invasive species conference call. Eric Kasza is still working on rapid response planning guidelines. The US Coast Guard is

developing a rule set to regulate ballast water discharge in the Great Lakes. A public hearing will take place in NYC. Giant hogweed is within the southwestern Park boundaries. DEC's website has a lot of information, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/39809.html> , and a hotline you can call if you think you have a sighting. Leslie provided several hand outs on how to identify, report, and manage hogweed. There are several native look-alikes, so it is important to differentiate among them; [www.nyis.info](http://www.nyis.info) has more information. Other publications that Leslie distributed included Mistaken Identities, the NYS Conservationist for kids issue focused on Alien Invasion, and a handbook about the Biology and Biological Control of Purple Loosestrife.

**Dan Spada (APA):** The Adirondack Park Agency will issue a resolution to the executive board encouraging them to support the boat transport law suggested by Teresa Sayward last year.

#### **IV. Issues and Followup Actions**

##### **Management on Forest Preserve (Slide 50-61)**

Hilary updated partners on the progress of APA and DEC adopting the inter-agency guidelines to enable the use of herbicide for terrestrial invasive plant management on state lands, regardless of the Unit Management Planning process. Currently the use of herbicide is restricted to only those infestations that are referenced in an approved Unit Management Plan (UMP) and that have herbicide listed as the recommended management technique. Continuing budget problems leave the possibility of UMPs being approved far away and new invasive plant occurrences are detected each year. Hilary showed slides documenting phragmites expansion since 2003 in several Forest Preserve wetlands. Dan has been spearheading the interagency guidelines and seemed optimistic that terrestrial plant management using herbicide should be approved by spring. He reported that the document is near completion and now contains language regarding aquatic invasive plants and forest pests too. The guidelines apply to aquatic plant management via benthic matting and hand harvesting. Terrestrial herbicide application is restricted to backpack spraying, hand bottle spraying, stem injections, and wick method. Permitting will be linked with the DEC's Adopt A Natural Resource Agreement (AANR) rather than UMPs.

##### **Meeting Response Capacity Needs**

*For spread prevention at boat launches:* (Slide 62) Hilary showed a map illustrating DEC water access sites across the region. With the rapid spread of AIS, Hilary voiced concern about needing increasing efforts to break those pathways, either through education and/or inspection at campgrounds and launches. John Davis asked whether there has been any discussion on having a "use fee" for accessing lakes via campgrounds to fund stewardship. Doug Fitzgerald wasn't able to answer, and Hilary and Meg said that that came up when identifying possible sources of revenue for the state's AIS program.

*For aquatic plant management:* This winter Tyler will plan for a program to utilize volunteer scuba divers for high priority infestations, like Follensby Clear Pond. Dan Kelting described his experience aligning volunteer divers to take the reigns of control programs. He will work with Tyler on this initiative including identifying insurance and equipment needs, etc.

*For terrestrial plant management:* The Terrestrial team has been lucky to have Wayne and 2 SCA interns for several years and now a seasonal APIPP intern too, but infestations are quickly growing out of our control. Hilary asked that partners keep in mind the need for dedicated seasonal staff to respond to terrestrial infestations and to send her any opportunities to have seasonal field techs, volunteers, and other teams assist.

##### **How to Respond to Infestations on Private Lands**

Hilary received an unconfirmed report that phragmites may be on private land which appeared to be an intentional planting. She asked the group about the best way to approach the landowner to be sensitive to private property rights: via site visit, phone call, or letter. John Davis suggested that one approach may be to send a generic letter to all landowners on the lake stating that invasives may or may not be on their land.

Caitlin Stewart and HCSWCD often manage invasives on private land. They either send a letter asking land owners for permission to conduct manual management on their land or they stop by and talk with the landowner. Partners agreed that a phone call may seem less intrusive and be more efficient than an individual letter. They also stressed the importance of first identifying the species before assuming it is invasive.

### **Burn Ban**

With the burn ban now in place, municipalities are no longer burning brush. This poses an obstacle and extra expense for those disposing of invasive woody brush etc. Wayne raised this as an issue and intends to chip and bag all material which will be more labor intensive.

### **Educational Materials**

Wayne Blanchard requested a supply of educational materials to distribute during the field season:

- Garlic mustard tip-strip from SCA, Wild parsnip ID, and others
  - APIPP's *Invasive Plants of the Adirondacks* brochure is available for distribution but does not cover all of the species of interest. APIPP staff will identify ways to meet these information needs.
- Materials for forest pest ID
  - Tom Colarusso, USDA, has EAB and ALB supplies on hand and should have more available for next field season. Contact him if you are in need of a supply.
- Doug Fitzgerald commented that there is increasing invasive species sign overload at boat launches. Hilary said that there should be at the most 2 DEC invasive species signs at DEC launches: 1 general sign, 'Protect Your Waters,' at all launches, and possibly a 2<sup>nd</sup> at only infected waters 'Attention: Invasive Species Are Present in This Waterbody'. It appears that when new DEC AIS signs are posted, the older DEC AIS signs are not taken down.
- Doug also commented that one comprehensive tip-strip about invasives would be of interest for consistency, rather than different publications and messages at each launch. DEC currently distributes their Don't Move Firewood tip-strips and occasionally also hands out publications that lake associations produce. He said that something like the Watershed Stewardship Program tip strip (in development) would be good.

### **Specific Species of Interest**

Partners expressed interest in more information about the following species:

- Wild parsnip
  - There is interest in drafting a health alert fact sheet about ID and control.
- Yellow hawkweed
  - Emily DeBolt will collect a specimen to confirm ID in the spring.
- Brittle naiad and Variable leaf milfoil
  - Tyler will develop fact sheets for incorporation into the volunteer training manual.
- Southern naiad
  - Aquatic partners will discuss the known distribution information about this species.

### **Eurasian watermilfoil Management**

Dan Kelting raised two issues regarding milfoil management:

- commitments to long-term management
- funding long-term costs

Many lake communities have resources for initial management but lack funding to manage in perpetuity. One

of the waterbodies successfully managing Eurasian watermilfoil is Horseshoe Pond. Here, they saw a dramatic reduction over 3 years of management. Cost data has mostly been gathered from Upper Saranac over the years, but the level of milfoil is quite low there, whereas other bodies with high levels might have higher management costs. Cost per acre of benthic barrier is 4-6 thousand dollars. A benthic mat can last upwards of 4 to 5 years but they do need to be maintained throughout the year. Dan moves his mats every season.

### **Invasive Species Definitions**

Emily DeBolt asked partners about the definition of invasives. She proposed that we adopt the federal and state definition which defines an invasive species as a species that is 1) non-native to the ecosystem under consideration, and 2) whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. In the latter case, the harm must significantly outweigh any benefits. All agreed. This is a slight modification to terminology that APIPP historically used which differentiated among native, non-native, invasive, and nuisance species.

## **V. Discussion**

### **2010 Annual Workplan (Slide 65-67)**

In the interest of time, Hilary skipped over the workplan which highlighted preliminary projects that APIPP PRISM will continue or initiate in 2010. She will circulate a comprehensive draft of the workplan via the listserve in the coming months.

### **PRISM Strategic Plan (Slides 68-81)**

Hilary said that the EPF PRISM contract requires that PRISMs develop strategic plans with input of PRISM partners and the public. From 2004-2006, 11 partners drafted the Adirondack Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan and sought buy-in from partner, the public, county governments, and the APA. The ANS Plan adhered to the guidelines of the federal ANS Task Force for state plans and was largely modeled after the Lake Champlain Basin ANS Management Plan. The ANS Plan is in need of updating, so Hilary proposed that this would be a good opportunity to consider using the ANS plan framework as the framework for the all-taxa PRISM strategic plan. She reviewed the components of the ANS Plan including goals, objectives, strategies, and actions and asked for feedback from partners.

In general, partners were supportive of using the existing ANS plan as the framework for a PRISM strategic plan, which would involve updating the aquatics information and integrating strategies and/or actions relevant to terrestrial and agricultural priorities.

Comments included:

- Place more emphasis on pathway analysis, vector management, and rapid response
- Questions involved:
  - Who is the audience for the plan and what is the plan's goal?
    - In general the audience is practitioners and the goal is to demonstrate that partners have a focused blueprint for addressing invasive species and setting priorities in the region. A secondary goal is to serve as a tool that could leverage funding to the region.
  - How often should the plan be updated?
    - Meg Modley said that the federal ANS Task Force requires plans to be updated every 5 years. This seemed like a reasonable timeframe for the PRISM strategic plan as well.
  - How should the plan be organized – by strategy (early detection, response and management, education etc.) or by taxonomic group (aquatic actions; terrestrial actions; agricultural actions)

- Though not yet finalized, the proposal would be to organize by strategy rather than by aquatic, terrestrial, and agriculture to avoid a lot of duplication; however, a table of actions organized by taxonomic group could be included as an appendix.

Hilary said that the writing team will meet to discuss further the issues raised and decide on the framework. A proposed timeline would be November – March (writing); April (send to partners for review and discussion at spring joint meeting); May – July (editing); August (present during conference); September - October (final editing and approval). Another option would be to hold a separate public meeting earlier in the summer and not wait until the August conference to present the plan.

Partners self-selected to assist with writing and review. If others are interested in participating, please contact Hilary. **Writing Team:** Hilary, Tyler, Steven, Emily Selleck, Dan Kelting, Keith Rivers, Caitlin Stewart, Mark Malchoff, Ed Snizek, Dan Spada. **Review Team:** Meg Modley and John Davis

### **Adirondack PRISM 2010 Conference (Slide 82)**

Paul Smith's College traditionally hosted a water quality workshop that brought resource managers, researchers, elected officials and landowners together. The last workshop about invasive species was held in 2005 and there continues to be a lot of great work underway in the region. In recent months the Aquatic Committee discussed holding a conference/workshop/information exchange in 2010, and, because the PRISM's scope is all-taxa, wanted to propose organizing a conference to the full partnership.

Given tight budgets and schedules, minimizing planning/hosting costs and participant costs is a must. Hilary said that the conference could be as simple or complex as the organizers wanted – having a line-up of single sessions during 1 day or concurrent sessions over multiple days.

One of the 12 recommendations of NYS Invasive Species Task Force was to hold a biennial conference but because the Environmental Protection Fund is not at full capacity, the biennial conference is one of the tasks that will not be completed in the coming fiscal year.

Partners discussed the following aspects of a conference:

- **who is the intended audience** (general public, or professionals / landowners working on invasive species issues). All agreed that raising general public awareness was of value and need but pointed to Adirondack Invasive Species Awareness Week as an opportunity to organize fun activities to engage all ages in localities across the region. Most partners were in agreement that the intended audience for a conference should be professionals / landowners / elected officials seeking information to help bolster their fight.
- **when to hold it** (during August, or during Invasive Species Awareness Week). See above regarding Awareness Week. August was the timing of past conferences and seemed to be successful, typically drawing 100+ participants.
- **where to hold it** (Paul Smiths, or some other location, perhaps in the southern Adirondacks). There is historic precedence for hosting the conference at Paul Smiths and facilities are well suited for this purpose, although it would again require that partners / landowners from the southern Adirondacks travel a greater distance. Paul Smiths often reduces, or eliminates, any hosting fees. It also expedites planning when a representative of the host organization is on the planning committee.
- **how long to hold it for** (1, 2 or 3 days). Most partners voted for a 1 day conference to cut down on planning, hosting, and participant costs, but Ray Oram suggested having an afternoon, overnight, and morning session, particularly if affordable housing / camping could be an option at Paul Smiths. This

would help make the day more manageable for those having to travel a few hours to attend.

All of these questions, in addition to content, will be discussed further among the conference planning team whose members were self-selected. If others are interested in participating, please contact Hilary.

**Conference planning team:** Dan Kelting, Meg Modley, Dan Spada, Caitlin Stewart, Emily DeBolt, Hilary, Tyler, Steven.

**Additional action items:** Hilary requested that if partners are helping to distribute APIPP posters, please send her the locations where they were posted.

**Websites for specific species discussed:**

Southern naiad (list as native to the US and native to NY)

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=NAGU>

<http://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=1930>

Variable leaf milfoil (listed as native and invasive to regions of the US)

<http://www.umext.maine.edu/onlinepubs/htmpubs/2530.htm>

Brittle naiad (invasive to the US)

<http://www.mainevolunteerlakemonitors.org/mciap/herbarium/EuropeanNaiad.php>

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=NAMI>

Wild parsnip (2 Cornell Cooperative Ext. pubs) (non-native noxious plant to the US)

<http://ecgardening.cce.cornell.edu/PDFs/Wild%20Parsnip.pdf>

<http://www.entomology.cornell.edu/Extension/Woodys/LandscapeHortPWT/Resources/WeedOfTheMonth2007April.pdf>

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/nameSearch>

Yellow hawkweed (non-native to US and regionally noxious/invasive)

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/profile?symbol=HICA10>

Mugwort (non-native to US, invasive in some regions)

[http://www.ppws.vt.edu/scott/weed\\_id/artvu.htm](http://www.ppws.vt.edu/scott/weed_id/artvu.htm)

<http://newyork.plantatlas.usf.edu/Plant.aspx?id=6958>

**Next joint committee meeting date:** To-be-determined, spring 2010